

Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission

Meeting Minutes – March 7, 2001

Indianapolis/Marion County Library Auditorium

Members present:

Adams – Steve Krull
Allen - Ron James
Carroll - Teresa Maxwell
Cass - Janet Fawley
Fountain - Jim Starling
Gibson – Jeffrey Snow
Huntington - Dwight Ericsson
Knox – Tracy Newberry
Miami - Kenneth Einselen
Parke – Anne Lynk (alternate)
Sullivan – John Gettinger
Tippecanoe - Norman "Lucky" Neiburger
Vigo - Keith Ruble (alternate)
Wabash – C. Robert Elrod
Warren – Nancy Grenard
DNR – Steve Morris
DOC Tourism - Marianna Weinzapfel
IDEM – Matt Jarvis

Proxies

Vermillion proxy given to Jim Starling

Counties not represented:

Jay
Posey
Wells

Dept. of Natural Resources staff present:

Dale Brier - DNR Outdoor Recreation

Visitors present:

Erik N. Aleson – Cass County Parks Dept.
Bernie Dahl - Banks of the Wabash
Dan McCain - Carroll County
Mike Mettler - Huntington County alternate
Don Morrison – Ecologistics Limited
Rory Robinson - National Park Service
Eleanor Starling

CALL TO ORDER

President Lucky Neiburger called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. All attendees introduced themselves. Steve Morris noted that Vermillion County had given their proxy vote to Jim Starling of Fountain County.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF JANUARY 3RD, 2001 MEETING MINUTES

Minutes approved as written.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Deferred to Old Business

COMMISSION FINANCIAL REPORT

Steve Morris presented the financial report. Out of the \$10,000 appropriated by the 1997 legislature, there is \$166.69 remaining. The current average cost per meeting is \$600.00 for postage, travel expenses, etc. The travel vouchers from the January meeting have not been submitted for reimbursement, nor will the invoices for this meeting. They will be paid when the WRHCC is given more money from the Indiana Legislature.

BANKS OF THE WABASH REPORT

Bernie Dahl mentioned the Banks of the Wabash has an annual meeting in Shadeland scheduled for April 18, 2001. All Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission (WRHCC) members and other interested parties are encouraged to attend. Bernie handed out a registration form for the conference.

Bernie asked the commission for money to help pay for a booth on Earth Day, April 21, 2001 in Terre Haute. Banks of the Wabash and the WRHCC would share the booth. Total cost would be \$300.

OLD BUSINESS

Distribution of WRHC Interpretive Brochures

The brochures are not being distributed the way they should be. Many visitors' centers do not have them on display. Steve Morris will be sending out more boxes soon. When trying to contact Barney Drerup, Steve found out that Barney had retired. The WRHCC currently has no INDOT representative. Steve will contact INDOT about appointing a new representative.

Legislative Initiative

Lucky Neiberger discussed House Bill 1307. It would grant greater liability protection to State Boards and Commissions.

The budget bill has moved from the House to the Senate. For the 2001-2002 biennium, there is \$4 million dollars from Build Indiana money for WRHC grants and \$100,000 from the General Fund for administrative costs. The Commission originally asked for \$5 million and \$200,000. Lucky asked the commissioners to join him at the Statehouse after the meeting, or to write to their Senators, and ask for the full \$200,000 for administrative costs. WRHCC letterhead and envelopes were provided at the meeting. Lucky also explained how they arrived at the \$200,000 figure for administrative costs. There was discussion on the proposed staff position.

Position description for proposed staff

After discussion, Jim Starling motioned to table the issue until the next meeting, when the amount of funding available would be known. Anne Lynk seconded.

Website and Newsletter

Dale Brier passed around the final version of the L'Esprit de Oubache newsletter. Dale requested events and articles for next year's newsletter. There will be no calendar of events in the 2001 newsletter because it is just duplicating what is already in the 2001 Indiana Festival Guide.

The WRHCC website also needs to be updated. Dale will email or send out a paper copy of each county's section. Please submit all links, information, or photos to Dale.

BREAK

NEW BUSINESS

Commission Action Plan

The Action Plan will be revisited in May. Rory Robinson will assist. It may take over an hour of meeting time to accomplish.

Suggestions for Future Speakers

Jim New was suggested from Cass County.

Dan McCain was suggested from Delphi.

Letters Sent

Correspondence was sent to Vigo County regarding a proposed \$1000 contribution toward the interpretive brochure cost.

Letters Received

Vigo County sent a letter inviting the WRHCC to participate with their Earth Day celebration. It would cost \$150 to share a booth with Banks of the Wabash. Ron James motioned to support the efforts of Vigo County, but because of the WHRCC current lack of funds, no money should be contributed. C. Robert Elrod seconded. Motion carried.

Keith Hiestand sent a letter to the WRHCC asking for funding for a river trip on the Wabash River. He wants to float the river, photograph and document it. He is requesting \$2500 for equipment and costs. The letter was also sent to the Director of the DNR and to the Governors office. Steve Morris recommended a response be written. Ron James motioned (Nancy Grenard amended) to support the local efforts of Keith Hiestand, but because of the WHRCC current lack of funds, no money should be contributed. Keith should be encouraged and would be a welcome speaker at a future meeting. Tracey Newberry seconded. Motion passed.

Other New Business

Janet Fawley mentioned that the WRHCC still owes \$700 on the balance of the interpretive brochures.

Steve Morris is still looking into ID cards for the Commission members. A list of names can be submitted to the parking facilities so that parking will be free for the downtown Indianapolis meetings.

The topic of paying for travel for Commission alternates was discussed. Janet Fawley motioned to approve and reimburse travel for only one person per county. Ron James seconded. Motion passed.

John Gettinger would like to see a canoe access and canoe campground in all 19 counties in the Wabash River Heritage Corridor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Parke County will host the July meeting and Purdue University Research Foundation (Tippecanoe County) will host the September meeting. Knox County will serve as an alternate site for these two meetings if a conflict arises.

New 2001 Indiana Recreation Guides and 2001 Fishing Guides were made available. The 2001 Fishing Guide lists a new access site on the Wabash River. There was discussion about the Indiana Fish Consumption Advisory book.

Dan McCain gave an update on developments with the Wabash and Erie Canal at Delphi.

Rory Robinson announced that the 2001 Indiana Trails and Greenway conference was a huge success. Over 400 people attended.

Steve Morris announced that four counties in North East Indiana (Adams, Huntington, Jay, and Wells) want to form the Wabash River Basin Commission. It is unknown what their motive is. Mike Mettler will find out more details and report back to Steve Morris.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, May 2nd, 2001 at France Park in Cass County.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Ron James. Seconded by John Gettinger. Passed.